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### PRAYER CHAIN REQUESTS

Please call  
Eleanor Galik  
708-302-1686



for immediate prayers



Living in the Word...that the  
Word may live in others.

### Living Word Lutheran Church

16301 South Wolf Road  
Orland Park, IL 60467

708-403-9673  
livingwordorland.org  
intouchlwlc@yahoo.com

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS  
Mon - Fri 9 am - 2 pm

SUNDAY SCHEDULE  
9:15 am Adult study  
10:00 am Worship

# IN TOUCH

with the ministry and people of Living Word

Volume 32, Issue 6

February 5, 2023

## "Blessed are the Peacemakers"

What Jesus calls good, and who Jesus calls blessed, is striking because his values seem to be upside down from our own. Many affirm this blessing with their lips, but in tumultuous times, we have tended toward the pragmatism of the fight.

It is not too bold to say there is a great deal of conflict to go around, and the question we should consider is how we Christians should respond to it. Unfortunately, it feels like we have been caught in the same mire as the rest of the world. Peacemaking, I've heard some Christians say, is not practical.

Take Jesus' words seriously though. If a peacemaker is to be called a child of God, we should want to be one. To be one, however, will take some work. The beauty of this compound word is that it mashes up the word peace with the word for doing or practicing. It is active.

### The Peacemakers' Commitment

The first thing is that the peacemakers must commit. Peacemaking is not being nice. Peacemaking may be kind, but it is not passive. It demands that we step into conflict. Peacemakers in the Bible would step between two warring parties. The peacemaker initiates reconciliation when others have wronged them. The peacemaker is quick to repent when they have wronged others.

In a world, where we have been disciplined to avoid conflict, peacemaking takes a commitment to move toward it. Today, our points of conflict are political, racial and religious. Conventional wisdom believes we make peace by avoidance. The peacemaker knows there is no peace without healing, and there is no healing without tough conversations and work.

### Truth for the Peacemakers

Second, the peacemakers must be committed to the truth. We have just been through what some have called "The Great Meme War of 2020." As the tensions of 2020 ramped up, so did the use of the meme. We lobbed attacks and insults at our rivals using these modern-day propaganda posters. Through our snarky posts, we took our stands by making the other side into caricatures who were ignorant, gullible or evil. The trouble is the memes were almost always untrue in whole or in part. We engaged in warfare by passing on false quotes, false statistics, exaggerated claims and stereotypes all to prop up our side. For years, we denigrated the truth. We claimed there is no truth. This last year we realized our error. The truth matters. Think about all that is related to peace that depends on truth. Justice, functional government, reconciliation, accountability, trust, humility and love all evaporate in the absence of the truth. To achieve true peacemaking, one must be committed to seeking and speaking the truth.


### The Peacemakers' Relationships

Where will we find the motivation for this commitment? How can we open our eyes to the truth? "No matter how aware you are, your knowledge will remain abstract and theoretical until you care about the people who face the negative consequences of racism."\*

The pursuit of meaningful relationships is essential to peacemaking. Relationships help us to see the humanity on "the other side." Many of our divides exist because we do not actually know each other. Peacemaking will not be easy, maybe not even possible. However, we are still called to seek it. We remember Paul's words for peacemakers in the Bible, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone".

# This Week at Living Word

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>5</b> <b>9:15am Adult Bible Study</b> <b>10:00am Worship-COMM</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <b>9:00am—12:00pm</b> <b>Preschool</b>  <b>10:00am Push Prayer</b>	<b>8</b> <b>9:00am—12:00pm</b> <b>Preschool</b>	<b>9</b> <b>9:00am—12:00pm</b> <b>Preschool</b>  <b>Valentine's Party</b> 	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>

## February Celebrations

## Stewardship Snapshot



**Feb 5** Anita Meier  
**Feb 6** Delores Urbank

### January 29th

**21 Worshipped**  
**11 Watched Online**  
**32 Total**

### Financial Support

\$1,930.00 General Fund Offering Deposit

Living Word's budget calls for weekly offerings averaging \$3654 to fund our ministry. Regular, intentional and meaningful contributions from what the Lord provides you helps carry this out.

### Church Contacts

[intouchlwlc@yahoo.com](mailto:intouchlwlc@yahoo.com)

**Ministry Support Coordinator, Diana Motel**

[dianamotel@yahoo.com](mailto:dianamotel@yahoo.com) 708-287-4939

#### Leadership Team

**Neal Hartz** - President 847-344-2410  
**Jim McKinney** - Vice President 708-359-8527  
**Bill Merchantz** - Treasurer 708-539-6027  
**Diana Motel** - Secretary 708-287-4939

#### Members at Large

**Pastor John Bucka** 815-931-2961  
**Bob Grossart** 708-870-0202  
**Paul Huang** 626-551-1446

**NEW ADDRESS** for Jerry and Barb Erjavec. For those that would like to send letters or cards of well wishes and blessings to Barb and Jerry, here is their new address as of Thursday, February 2nd. 303 E. Washington Street, Bensenville, IL 60106 Apartment #302. They will be living closer to their son Gerald Erjavec now.

## Devotional Time

### Opportunities to Connect with God

**PUSH PRAYER** meets every **Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.** to pray for our church, community and world. We welcome requests (call 708.403.9673) or visit our website to send in your prayer request, or join us for 30-40 minutes each week.

### RADIO & TV OPPORTUNITIES

- Worship Anew**—8:00 a.m. Sunday - Comcast channel 184 (TLN) & 8 (SD) , WPWR channel 50, AT&T U-verse channel 1008 (HD) & 8 (SD), Dish Network # 8495; 10:30 a.m. Sunday - DIRECTV channel 377 (TCT)
- The Lutheran Hour** 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Sundays on 1230 AM; and 9:30 a.m. Sundays on 1580 AM

**DEVOTIONAL OF THE WEEK** *[The people] kept looking for Jesus, but as they stood around in the Temple, they said to each other, "What do you think? He won't come for Passover, will he?" Meanwhile, the leading priests and Pharisees had publicly ordered that anyone seeing Jesus must report it immediately so they could arrest him. - John 11:56-57 (NLT)*

It was getting dangerous for Jesus to be in public, and everyone knew it. Jesus knew it too, but He was not deterred. He had already counted the cost of the way of the cross and determined to pay it—for us. In this new year, let us also count the cost and be willing to pay it as we follow the way of the cross.

## Living Word Endowment Fund

### LIVING WORD ENDOWMENT FUND (as of 1/31/2023)

The current value of the fund is \$158,497.12 invested in Thrivent funds. Current market value exceeds cost of investments by \$23,484.96. Since inception (10/12/05), the Fund has earned interest and dividends totaling \$50,031.43. Of this, \$25,016.72 will return to Living Word for growth initiatives.

#### THIS REPRESENTS A GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING!

To Date:	Total contributions	\$84,980.73
	Market value over cost	23,484.96
	<u>Dividends and interest</u>	<u>50,031.43</u>
	<b>Total market value</b>	<b>\$158,497.12</b>



#### HOW THE ENDOWMENT FUND WORKS

Contributions treated as donation for tax purposes. Funds invested by Thrivent Financial. 50% of interest and dividends available for church growth. Interested in estate planning? Call Tim Regan/Thrivent (708-326-4750). If any questions, call Bob Grossart

## Living Word News

**2022 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS** are now available and in the small box on the desk next to the office. Please review carefully and notify us of any discrepancies that you may encounter.

**MUSIC CONCERT** will be held here on Saturday, February 25th at 1:00pm. Enjoy an hour or so of musical entertainment as one of Gretel Hansen's student will entertain you with her solo concert.



**TRANSITION TEAM UPDATE** Pastor Dubensky has received the Call documents via the post office and had met with the transition team on Tuesday evening and will be meeting again this Monday. They discussed the possibility of Christ Lutheran still partnering with us, and medical insurance needs for Pastor Dubensky and his wife. On Monday they will be discussing the items that we were asked for and making plans for the 19th. Pastor Matt said that he will carefully and prayerfully consider this position with Living Word and would need the full 4-6 weeks that is allowed to him to consider this call. He has agreed that him and his wife can be here Sunday, February 19th to meet the congregation, he is hoping that they can also be here for the worship service that day as well. We are planning to have a pot luck meal that day to warmly welcome them and to share quality fellowship time with them. Please see the sign up sheets on the desk in the fellowship hall to let us know how many people can come and what you can bring. Thank you in advance for all of your yummy contributions.



**"The Meet & Greet & EAT Pot Luck"**  
**Pastor and Mrs. Dubensky**  
**February 19, 2023**

**FEBRUARY MISSION OF MONTH** is the Orland Park Police Department. Let's help give back to the men and women who help protect us every day. Just twice this week they had to come out as our alarms had gone off due to the extreme cold weather. They walked around the entire perimeter of the building making sure all of the windows and doors were still secure. They even came out on Tuesday morning to make sure it was safe for Diana to enter the church. We are very grateful for what they do for us, and there's no better way to show our support to them in giving back to our community for the things they need to help protect us day in and day out.

### February Mission of the Month Orland Park Police



A great way to give back to our community is by supporting our local Police department. We will be collecting donations all of February for them.

**A THANK YOU NOTE** was received from the Working On Wellness Foundation. It reads: *"Dear Living Word Lutheran Church of Orland, Thank you for your generous support over the past year. It is because of donors like you that we are able to help those in need. ... We look forward to your continued support next year and sharing the organization's success with you in the future."* It is signed, *"Sincerely, Mary Ellen Smolinski"*. The entire letter can be found on the bulletin board next to the office.

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT** During these very trying and difficult times, like all of us, the offerings for the church have also been suffering and are below the projected budget. Please help us and come to worship so that we can have better attendance totals and that we can reconnect with each other as we worship together. In doing so, we will be able to reach our goals for the endowment fund. Thank you as always for keeping us moving forward in these times.

**DON'T FORGET TO** remember when doing gift card shopping to keep using the app and/or website that Diana had set up for us last year to help raise money for our church just by doing your birthday shopping or buying gift cards for other happy occasions. With a mobile app, RaiseRight or the website ShopWithScrip, you can purchase gift cards for your friends, family, and even yourself and they will donate 3% of the sales to our church. If you need help setting this up, just let Diana know and she can help you set it up, and she will also have all of this up on our website and Facebook page, and once the account gets set up, our unique code to use in order for the 3% is **YL5M6W4APYDX**. This is the most safe and secure way to buy gift cards these days, Still be as generous as you always are, just be aware to do it safely and securely, and help raise extra cash for us. So as you are starting some of your Christmas shopping this year, stay nice and warm at home and do it from your phone or laptop and have the gift card company donate the 3% back to Living Word.



**PRESCHOOL KIDS** said good bye to their igloo this past week. They are looking forward to their new theme of dinosaurs for February. They were very busy this week with their story time in the igloo and doing all of their craft projects. As you can see they painted ice and also painted with forks to created snowy glaciers for the polar bears. Plus they had another birthday celebration this past Thursday for Gabriella. Look for more information to come about the Open House Diana will be having sometime later this month. Three of her students are returning next year and one of the students will be having her younger sister join her next February when she will be turning 3. One of our graduating students will also have a younger brother coming in the fall. Diana has heard from former preschool families that have younger children and will be signing them up for the fall semester as well. Please help spread the word about the great program Diana has for these children. Next year is promising to be a much larger class already.



## 2-5-2023 Message Outline

### **"Blessed are Those..."**

The Psalmist says: "*Blessed are those who fear the Lord...*"

#### **1) The prophet Isaiah says blessed are the AUTHENTIC.**

<sup>3</sup> 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?' "Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers. <sup>4</sup> Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. <sup>5</sup> Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord?? <sup>6</sup> "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? <sup>7</sup> Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? <sup>8</sup> Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. <sup>9</sup> Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. Isaiah 58:3-9a

#### **2) The Apostle Paul says blessed are the WISE.**

When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. <sup>2</sup> For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified... <sup>6</sup> We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. <sup>7</sup> No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. 1 Corinthians 2:1b-2, 6-7

#### **3) Jesus says blessed are the RIGHTEOUS.**

<sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. <sup>18</sup> For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. <sup>19</sup> Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup> For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:17-20

And from our Epistle reading today:

